



WESTERN CAPE MAZDA MX-5 CLUB

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CHAIRMAN'S REPORT: 2014-07-26 OR: GETTING NUKED AT K.N.P.S.

The 26th July was the first Saturday meet in a long time – certainly the first such outing since I became a Member! Judging by the reaction, though, it probably won't be the last time that we meet on a Saturday. All we need to do next time is to get the weather gods to play along – the 26th was just *such* a typical Cape Winter's day!

Melkbosstrand was a typical West Coast *dorpie* until the 1970's when Eskom decided to build South Africa's first (and still only) nuclear power plant close to the town. Everything changed as Melkbos lost it's innocence: property values, for instance, skyrocketed to the point where a 495 square meter vacant plot is today offered at some R5M: in the early 1980's, I could buy a newly-built face-brick house close to it at R85K. (At the time, we were renting that self-same house – at R225-00 per month!) Progress, I suppose, *über alles*

Attending the meet were yours truly and Die Baaasss; Deon Labuschagne; George and Anna-Marie Slade; Charmaine Jackson and friend Rob; Allan and Allison Sheard; Rod Manson; Chris and Daphne Foster; new Members Richard and Hazel Carolin; Liz Morgan and daughter Samantha and Mike and Maryanne Little. We also welcomed as guests Jill and Eric Solman: it seems that Eric's hard work in re-doing their home is drawing to a close and we will hopefully welcome them back as full Club Members again at the start of the new year.

Brian Lewer and Gerald and Jocelyn Poswell confirmed attendance but were forced to cancel at the last moment due to unforeseen circumstances.

Apologies were received from Diane Novitzkas (other commitments); André and Nerine Davis; Derrill and Barbara Papendorf (abroad, visiting their daughters); Julian and Jenny Seymour (abroad – *again!*?); Phil and Julia Wilmot (why on earth would anybody want to *walk* the Fish River Canyon when you can *drive* an MX-5 somewhere?); Soné Mouton and Paul Burger (Paul still on crutches); Brian and Avril Roy; Di and Neville Norton (gone sailing); Duncan and Rowena Mackintosh; David and Julie Dyer and Gordon Dreyer. André Bakkes (*the reporter who made Derrill and Rod famous!*) accepted an invite to join us on a Club Run but apologized for this month: depending on his rather busy schedule, he may accompany us on a next run.

Hope I got it all spot-on this time: if not, *please* let me know!

George Slade and the "Southerners" met at and travelled from Constantia, meeting up with the rest of the gang at the News Café on the Table View beach front from where we set off on a short (some 9km) drive via the coastal road to the Koeberg Club Restaurant at Melkbosstrand. As mentioned, it was a typical Cape Winter's day and no-one could drive top-down. The restaurant is located in an extension of Melkbosstrand called Duynefontein: this is a housing estate built by Eskom to accommodate staff employed at "KNPS" - Koeberg Nuclear Power Station.

The housing estate itself is a credit to Melkbosstrand: well laid out and with spacious, well-built homes that are today commanding premium prices on the local housing market.

Central to Duynfontein is a huge complex still simply known as “Eskom Club” – initially built by Eskom for it’s Staff, it contained *inter alia* a Club House, with most sporting activities (e.g. tennis, cricket, soccer, rugby, bowls, etc.) supported and catered for. (The sporting activities that I regularly took part in were Darts and Snooker, conveniently located in the Club’s Bar. And mostly, when good friend Willie Koorsteen was attending at the Bar, we didn’t even bother playing anything at all)

Our venue is situated in what was the cricket club’s premises: it’s small and intimate but still needs to “build” an ambience that probably comes with time only. The restaurant is fairly new and the fare on offer, together with the prices, found huge approval among Members. However, I personally thought that they could/should brush up on their service: our waitrons, Chloë and Donna, were friendly and helpful but I think the kitchen should be better prepared to handle 20+ diners sitting down at once. It has a separate pub and smoking area and also has big-screen TV’s for those who want to watch some sporting event. We watched the F1 qualifiers – and didn’t your heart go out to HAM44? Who can forget that disconsolate shake of the head, the sagging shoulders, as he looked back at his burning Benz? But then, Lewis made up for everything by driving the Silver Arrow from the pit-lane to the podium on Sunday in a stunning drive that must earn respect from even his biggest detractors!

Thanks to all who wrote and said “*lekker plek* – do it again but we want a good, long drive next time”: your wish is the Committee’s command. Deon is busy planning something for August as we speak.

General:

1: It is with a touch of sadness that I announce the resignation of Diane Novitzkas as Club Secretary. Happily, Di remains as a Member and we certainly thank her for her services as Secretary over the past months.

2: It is with huge disappointment that the Committee announces the cancellation of all outstanding orders regarding apparel from our suppliers, Brands Ahead Promotions. After some two months of begging and cajoling, we simply reached a stage where we were not prepared to accept any further empty promises for delivery of goods ordered and paid for. Please be assured that all moneys paid by Members will be refunded: we are also searching for a new supplier who will be able to use the already-digitised patterns from Brands Ahead. There will be some benefit, I guess: Members will now be able to shop for their own apparel and then bring it in to be “branded” with the Club’s logo.

3: Having mentioned the idea before, Mike Little again hit upon the popular idea of a gymkhana event when seeing the unused tennis courts next to the restaurant. There is enough space and it will be held as a fun and skills event and *not* a speed event. We are even thinking of perhaps inviting (an)other motoring club(s) to join in the fun – with certificates and trophies on offer. There is a lot of planning (getting permissions from all and sundry is but a small part of it) still to do but watch this space!

This is the 26th winter that I’ve lived in my house – it is also the 26th time that I’ve promised myself “*volgende winter het ek ‘n kaggel!*” So: I need to earn some money (have you seen the prices of these things lately?!) therefor it’s off to work I have to go. As always, we want and need your input: ideas, suggestions, news, criticism, whatever: please keep it coming!

Until next time

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